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23 March 1962

Draft Comments on CRAG 3/4 - 62

1 March 1962 -- A Study of the CIA Requirements System

I. Description of the existing CIA requirements mechanisms and discussion of problem areas:

Parts A. and B. of the subject report present a useful description of the existing CIA requirements mechanisms and the problem areas in the system. The report, however, is overly preoccupied with the problem of duplication and fails to deal sufficiently with the deficiencies involved in the translation of requirements into effective collection action (e.g., the long line between analyst and collector and the failure of middle men to satisfactorily convey the analysts' needs, etc.).

II. Proposed solutions:

A. A high-level policy group

We would generally agree that a high-level policy group at the DDCI level should be established though we do not agree with all of the functions proposed for this committee.

1. It is not clear what is meant by coordination of the overall requirements in collection effort. What is not needed is another stage in the flow of collection requirements which would further remove the analyst from the collector and delay the transmission of requirements to the field. If what is meant, on the other hand, is that the committee or its staff and working groups will review,

post facto, collection requirements and collection actions to identify deficiencies in the system and to provide direction and guidance for improvement this would seem to make sense.

2. The responsibility "to review requirements designed to meet high-level priority objective and, as needed, direct the initiation of studies to develop comprehensive collection plans" must be carried out in close cooperation with those groups primarily responsible for these priority areas (GMAIC, JAEIC, etc.) and must be undertaken in a way which will not unduly burden these groups which are already over-taxed with priority demands.

3. The report stresses the responsibility of the committee to recommend "the creation of new collection capabilities as appropriate." While this should be done we believe that a greater contribution can be made by insuring that present collection capabilities are effectively utilized.

4. It is generally agreed that the committee could usefully serve as "an appeals board to adjudicate differences relative to requirements and collection problems." However, the committee should not continually pass on the assignment of collection priorities but rather to confine itself to resolution of important questions of principle and the transmission of guidance and directives to appropriate components. In general, we believe that this committee would serve a useful purpose by adopting a pragmatic approach to the improvement of the system as it presently exists; towards the end of satisfying most effectively the legitimate needs of the analyst

so that he in turn may satisfy the requirement of the ultimate consumer. This, we agree, will require high-level members from the DD/I and DD/P.

B. A central requirements mechanism

In general we are strongly opposed to the central requirements mechanism as described and, insofar as we agree that certain of the functions proposed for this mechanism should be undertaken, we feel that this might most effectively be accomplished through a staff or ad hoc groups of the top-level committee. If it is decided that a central indexing facility is needed we believe this should be located in OGR. Regarding specific proposals for this central mechanism (contained in the report) our views are as follows:

1. The suggestion is made that "its primary mission would be to see to it that each requirement is developed and coordinated in the best possible way to meet community needs." We believe that a staff of the main committee should on behalf of the committee maintain an awareness of existing requirements as a basis for recommending improvements in the requirements system to the committee and that it should most certainly not represent another step in the flow of requirements to the collector. The Committee staff would seek to promote the kind of guidance and direction required to insure that the individual analyst or specialized committee takes the necessary steps in conjunction with other analysts and components to insure, for example, that there is a minimum of unnecessary duplication of requirements; that requests do not ask for information already available, etc.

2. Point 2. a. in Annex D states that the central facility will "coordinate all requirements as appropriate, checking against undesirable duplication and overlap . . ." We believe that while there should be some assurance that analysts' requirements are not duplicating and overlapping requirements already issued this is an analyst responsibility in the first instance and that insofar as general problems of duplication are identified they should be worked out between the offices concerned with urging from the main Committee if necessary. An interruption in the flow of requirements to the collector to insure that there is no duplication would be unwieldy and undesirable. However, a staff attached to the high-level committee could and should engage in a post audit of requirements to identify problem areas involving duplication.

3. The studies referred to in point 2. b., of Annex D and the direction and guidance stemming from such studies could also be undertaken by a staff attached to the main committee or by ad hoc groups reporting to the main committee.

4. Point 2. c. in Annex D suggests "a central machine controlled register to index all requirements." This could be done selectively on behalf of the responsible research office. However, a detailed indexing of all requirements would require more personnel than justified by gains in the flow of intelligence information.

5. Point 2. d. in Annex D suggests that the central facility would assign priorities. This responsibility belongs in the research offices. However, an audit of the manner in which these priorities

are assigned would be highly desirable if undertaken at the DDCI level in that this would insure that the research offices are not being entirely parochial in the assignment of such priorities and would provide a means of arbitrating differences arising over assignment of priorities. For the most part, however, these difficulties can be resolved in the specialized collection committees in line with current practices.

6. Point 5. e. in Annex D -- if a central facility for collection requirements served on CIA by agencies outside of CIA is going to have the kind of processing suggested by other paragraphs in this annex it would slow down the processing of requirements inordinately.

7. Regarding para. f., Annex D -- a permanent staff of the main committee could very usefully provide guidance and ground rules to the research offices on the subject of evaluations.

8. Regarding point g., Annex D -- insofar as this function needs to be done it could best be accomplished under the direction of the main committee at the DDCI level.

9. Regarding point h., Annex D -- it is unnecessary to monitor and report actions taken on all requirements and "maintain case histories thereon." This can best be done selectively by the office primarily concerned by the requirements in question, although the machine facilities of OCR will be essential to assist in this process.

10. We strongly object to the suggestion of point 3. of Annex D that a requirements facility -- with the functions described -- be

established in the Office of Central Reference. Insofar as the functions described in Annex D need to be carried out they can best be performed at the DDCI level by a permanent staff and by the use of ad hoc groups. The staff should, of course, be supported by machine and registry support administered in OCR.